

Message Text

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64

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-05 MC-02 SAM-01 IO-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 DHA-02 AID-05

/101 W

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R 230628Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7462

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 14755

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT ET

SUBJ: REPORTED MEETING OF ETHIOPIAN INSURGENT LEADERS IN KHARTOUM

REF: MAERTENS/KASSA MEMCON OF 12/4/75 NOTAL

1. DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUE HAS LEARNED FROM FAIRLY RELIABLE SOURCE THAT A MEETING OF ETHIOPIAN INSURGENT LEADERS COMMENCED IN KHARTOUM DEC 19. HIS INFORMANT STATED THAT RAS MENGAEASHA SEYOUM AND GENERAL NEGA TEGEGNE OF THE ETHIOPIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION (EDU) , SULTAN ALI MARA OF THE AFAR, BIT. ADANA, AND OTHER INSURGENT LEADERS ARE IN ATTENDANCE. ALLEGED PURPOSE OF CONFERENCE IS TO CONSOLIDATE THE AGREEMENT TO COOPERATE AGAINST THE EPMG WHICH WAS FORMULATED EARLIER IN INSURGENT MEETINGS HELD IN BEGEMDIR PRVINCE AND IN JIDDA.

2. EMBASSY HAS BEEN TOLD BY SOURCE LINKED TO FORMER
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ARISTOCRACY THAT EDU HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL COMMENCE A

MAJOR ANTI-GOVERNMENT OFFENSIVE ON/ABOUT DEC 25. THIS IS IN CONTRAST TO EARLIER REPORTS (INCLUDING REF MEMCON) THAT ACTION WAS SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE IN EARLY JAN.

3. REFMEMCON REPORTS INFLUX OF WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION INTO NORTHER PROVINCES. OTHER SOURCES HAVE SINCE CONFIRMED THAT WEAPONS ARE BEING PROVIDED TO WOULD-BE INSURGENTS BY EDU. NUMEROUS SOURCES HAVE REPORTED THAT THE COST OF A SINGLE ROUND OF RIFLE AMMUNITION IN THE NORTH HAS DECREASED FROM A PREVIOUS HIGH TO ETH \$13-14 TO 50 CENTS PER ROUND NOW.

COMMENT: PRICE OF AMMUNITION IS A GENERALLY GOOD INDICATION OF THE AMOUNT BEING BROUGHT INTO THE COUNTRY BY VARIOUS INSURGENT GROUPS, PRINCIPALLY THE EDU. LACK OF AMMUNITION HAS BEEN MAJOR HINDRANCE TO NUMEROUS PREVIOUS INSURGENT MOVEMENTS. WHILE AVAILABILITY OF AMMO DOES NOT EQUATE TO POSSIBLE SUCCESS OF INSURGENT MOVEMENT, IT OBVIOUSLY IS A CRITICAL FACTOR. EPMG AUTHORITIES MAKE NO BONES OF THEIR CONCERN OVER POTENTIAL OF INSURRECTION IN NW ETHIOPIA LED BY MEN LIKE RAS MENGESHA SEYOUM AND GENERAL NEGA WHO HAVE BOTH TRADITIONAL STANDING AND PROVED MILITARY TALENTS.
HUMMEL

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